Proposal for Participation in the University Scholars Program
Department of Political Science
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A. Purpose and Rationale

Reasons for our participation include: a) responding to student demand for such a program, and b) incentivizing our best students to pursue their graduate studies in our program, rather than elsewhere, thus helping to raise the quality of our graduate classes.

B. Resources and Faculty

The Department of Political Science currently has 17 full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members and one FTTI. We are in the process of interviewing for an 18th tenure-track position. We currently have 410 undergraduate majors, and we also are responsible for advising 155 international studies majors who take many of our courses. At the graduate level we offer the MA and PhD in Political Science as well as the MPA (Masters in Public Administration).

C. Implementation

Our participation in the University Scholars program will be publicized so that all students are aware of the program. Faculty will also individually encourage applications from their best students. Applications will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee, and those that are accepted will be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for his or her approval.

To be considered for admission to Phase I, students must meet the following criteria:

- Overall GPA of at least 3.75 (as computed within the plus/minus system)
- Completion of at least 61 hours
- Submission of two (2) letters of recommendation from Political Science faculty/instructors; these letters should evaluate the student’s talent, motivation and potential for graduate study

To be considered for admission to Phase II, students must meet the following criteria:

- Overall GPA of at least 3.75 (as computed within the plus/minus system)
- Completion of at least 91 hours
- Meeting of UA’s residency requirement
- Completion of the core curriculum
- Completion of 3/4 of the hours required for the major and minor. Based on normal 3-hour courses, this effectively means the completion of 24 hours, or 8 courses.
- Submission of two (2) letters of recommendation from Political Science faculty (for students for whom Phase 2 is a first step; for those admitted for Phase 1, no further letters are required, but overall GPA must be maintained at a minimum of 3.75).
Once students are admitted to Phase II, they must apply, and be admitted to, the Graduate School. All of the normal departmental requirements for graduate admission will apply, including submission of GRE scores, and the decision will be made by the Graduate Studies Committee in Political Science and forwarded to the Graduate School for approval.

Upon admission to the Graduate School, the student will begin a program of study leading to the master's or doctoral degree as approved by his or her department and by the dean of the Graduate School. *The program of study for prospective University Scholars must be submitted to the Graduate School prior to the student's enrollment in graduate classes.*

**D. Typical Schedule of Coursework for the Bachelor's and Master's Degrees**

*The BA*: The Political Science BA requires 30 hours of coursework, which must include PSC 101; at least two courses out of 201, 201, 203, 204, 205, and 206; at least one course from each of three subfields; and 12 hours of 300/400 courses. The three subfields are American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, and Public Administration; the undergraduate catalog enumerates the courses that count toward each subfield.

There is thus considerable freedom as to which particular courses are taken. A typical schedule might consist of the following:

- **Year 1**: PSC 101 Introduction to American Government (3 hours)
  - PSC 2xx Field 1 (3 hours)
- **Year 2**: PSC 2xx Field 2 (3 hours)
  - PSC 2xx Field 3 (3 hours)
- **Year 3**: PSC 3xx or 4xx (9 hours)
- **Year 4**: PSC 3xx or 4xx (9 hours)

*The MA*: The Political Science MA requires 36 hours of coursework (Plan II, the non-thesis option) or 30 hours of coursework plus a thesis (Plan I). Students are required to take courses in each of three subfields, as well as two methods courses. The Graduate Catalog shows the courses that count toward each subfield. Comprehensive exams are typically taken upon completion of coursework, or in the last semester of coursework, with both Plan I and Plan II.

Students vary in their pace of completion of the program, but a typical schedule might consist of:

- **Year 1**: PSC 521 Research Design (3 hours; Fall)
  - PSC 522 Quantitative Methods in Political Science I (3 hours; Spring)
  - 12-18 more hours in each of the three chosen subfields

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1 Plan II students take at least three courses in each subfield, while Plan I students take three courses in two subfields and two courses in the third subfield.
Year 2: 12-18 hours in each of the three chosen subfields (for Plan I students, this will include 6 hours of 599: Thesis Research). Comprehensive exams in Spring of Year 2.

The MPA: The MPA also requires 36 hours of coursework (Plan II, the non-thesis option) or 30 hours of coursework plus a thesis (Plan I). Both plans require completion of PSC 565, PSC 662, and PSC 667; three hours of quantitative methods; and three additional core courses in public policy and administration. Students must complete the remaining 9-15 hours in an area of concentration or through advanced coursework in a variety of subfields of public policy and public administration. As with the MA, the MPA is typically completed within two years.

The PhD: The Department admits highly qualified students directly into the PhD program with no Master's required. The PhD requires 60 hours of coursework, a written and oral comprehensive exam, and completion of a dissertation. Students must take three required methods courses: the two listed above for the MA, plus PSC 621. Methods courses must be completed sequentially in the first three semesters. Students take 18 hours of coursework in a major field, and 12 hours in each of two minor fields. Comprehensive exams are typically taken at the end of the third or beginning of the fourth year of studies, after which the student begins work on the dissertation prospectus.

E. How the Program Will Meet All UA Undergraduate and Graduate Requirements

The program will meet all UA and A&S requirements because it contains the same course requirements as the standard BA and MA/MPA curricula, with the exception that some graduate courses may be applied toward the BA degree. All core curriculum requirements must be met. No more than 15 hours may be dual-counted toward both the BA and MA. Because ¾ of the major must be met prior to Graduate School enrollment, only 6 hours of graduate PSC courses may be used to meet the PSC major requirement; other PSC graduate hours may count as electives to meet the 120-hour requirement for the BA.

The BA degree normally will be awarded at the commencement immediately following satisfactory completion of the first year of graduate study and attainment of a total of 120 semester hours of credit. The MA, MPA or PhD will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of those degrees.